

THE SETTING

364 certain rent-free lands. Moreover, every morning the womenfolk
 351 of each house sweep and clean that portion of the lane-which lies
 directly in front of their own house, sprinkle it with water or water
 mixed with cow-dung and often decorate the entrance with designs
 drawn with millet or rice flour. Notwithstanding this, the lanes are
 not always very clean. The reasons for this are many. The Yetti
 Madigas do not sweep the village very regularly; and the women,
 [514] when they have finished their housework, often throw the refuse
 into the public thoroughfare. Thirdly, very few people have
 latrines in their houses, and even those who have them are in-
 clined to make their children ease themselves at the side of the
 [231] road. However, the pigs kept by the Erkala caste as well as the
 large number of dogs in the village are good scavengers and
 help to keep the village clean.

4. THE HOUSES

342 The dwellings in Shamirpet can be classified into three main
 351 groups: the Bhawanti, the Penkutillu and the Gudse.

The *Bhawanti*. This is a large house with stone walls and tiled
 roofs; it generally stands in its own compound, which is sur-
 rounded by a wall, and invariably has five to six rooms. The
 following account of the house of I.R., a woman with consider-
 able local influence and a good-sized agricultural holding, will
 illustrate this type of house. As we enter the gate in the compound
 wall we find ourselves in front of an open space which constitutes
 [372] the courtyard of the house. On one side of this courtyard there is a
 cattle-shed, the end of which is partitioned off as a store-room for
 fuel-cakes made of cow-dung. Opposite the gate across the court-
 yard is a verandah running the whole length of the house; at one
 end of this verandah there is a small room in which agricultural
 implements are kept. The main door of the house leads into an
 [515] inner court which is open to the sky. In the centre is a stone-lined
 sink, known as *gachhu*, which can be drained and cleaned, and here,
 sitting on small wooden stools, the women of the house-bath. The
 inner court is surrounded on three sides by rooms; on one side
 there are two inter-connected rooms, the first being used as a
 dining-room and the second as a kitchen. Opposite this, running
 the whole length of the inner court, is a long room, while opposite
 to the main house door and across the inner court is a door which

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353 these are generally out of order and are used rather as decorations than to tell the time.

415 Household utensils are generally made by the local potter. But
 [556] shining brassware, including a few large pots for storing water, are a mark of respectability. Food is served on brass, bell-metal or aluminium plates. Water is drunk from metal mugs or brass beakers. In some houses a couple of china cups and saucers and a few glass plates are also to be seen.

342 *The Penkutillu.* This type of house is smaller and less ostentatious,
 351 and is built by average cultivators with small holdings, who are neither rich nor poor according to village standards. These houses also have a courtyard and possibly a backyard; a verandah and two or three rooms which are used for various purposes. The walls are of stone, the floor of mud and the roof is tiled. The cattle-shed is generally close to the living-room and there is neither latrine nor bathroom in the house.

352 This type of house is also decorated with carvings on the doors,
 353 and designs are painted on the wall. In such houses furniture is regarded as a luxury; there may be a few bedsteads, some small
 415 wooden stools and possibly a crude chair or two. People with city contacts decorate the walls of their houses with commercial calendars or coloured magazine covers. The household utensils in this type of house are, except for metal plates used for serving food, of
 [556] earthenware, even water being stored in clay pots. Yet respectability demands that such a house should have at least some brass utensils. These are greatly coveted by the ambitious housewife.

342 *The Gudse.* These are the commonest type of dwellings found in Telangana, and are indeed the most numerous in Shamirpet. The walls of these huts are either made of mud or they are made of wattle-screen and plastered with mud. The roof is always thatched. The hut is built in a small enclosure and has generally only one
 352 room, from which the kitchen is partly partitioned. These huts have
 415 very little furniture and all household utensils are the wares of the local potter. The few metal utensils which the family possesses are among the most treasured parts of the household property.

351 All the three types of village dwellings have some features in
 ● [515] common. Almost all of them have some open space either at the front or at the back. This is generally enclosed. Here women bath and in times of emergency, such as illness or other incapacity, it may also be used as a latrine. During the rainy season

RITUAL STRUCTURE

583 regarded as breaches of the established rules of society and treated accordingly.

585 It is difficult to summarize the rites and observances involved in a Hindu marriage, for they differ greatly from caste to caste, and from family to family. Here only a very general outline can be given.

The wedding takes place in the bride's house, on an auspicious day fixed by the two parties on the advice of the Brahmin priest. The bridegroom's party, consisting of relations and friends, leave their village in good time to arrive in the bride's village at least a day before the actual date of the marriage. On arrival they are received with great ceremony by the bride's people, and are lodged in a house kept vacant and clean for their use. In the courtesies that are exchanged it is necessary to make some special effort to keep the bridegroom's mother and sisters pleased for any dissatisfaction to them is likely to lead to trouble which may hold up further rites. While the bridegroom's party try to settle down in their house, the bride's people finalize the arrangements for the first dinner. When everything is ready word is sent to the bridegroom's party. After the dinner nothing remains to be done on that day. The guests return to their temporary abode; the hosts get busy to make everything ready for the rites of the next day.

[515] When the next day arrives, the bride's mother and other female relations carry water and tugs to the groom's mother and other guests so that 'they may wash their mouths'. A little later breakfast is sent to them. The first major rite for the day is the worship of the bride's *kula-devata* or family god. In this both the bride and the bridegroom participate. The second major rite is known as *lagnam*, which must be performed at an auspicious hour determined by the Brahmin on the basis of his astrological calculations. The bride's party go in a procession to bring the guests to the marriage shed. At the appointed hour the *lagnam* is performed by chanting religious verses. The bridegroom ties a necklace of black beads round the bride's neck. This necklace symbolizes her married status, and she should not be without it unless she is widowed. He also puts rings on the second toes of her feet. Before the tying of *mangalsutra* (black beads) the two have to promise to stand by each other through all phases of life, for the mutual satisfaction of bodily, economic and spiritual needs. But the marriage is not yet complete. To put the seal of religious authority on it, the important

LIVING TOGETHER

515 Sponging children with warm water is now often replaced by two or three cold baths per week; the frequency being more among the Brahmins and Komtis and less among the Muslims and the untouchables. The elders practise considerable deception in their dealings with the children. Efforts at disciplining them tend to be rather erratic; and extremes of affection and strictures are by no means uncommon. Jealousies between siblings may be induced by members of the family who take delight in watching the irritation, anger and aggressiveness of little children. Tantrums during this stage are frequent. The methods commonly employed to pacify the child are: distracting it by making funny noises, rocking it in a cradle, offering it food or milk, scolding it loudly, threatening it, and finally boxing its ears and spanking it.

855 Later childhood begins at about five and continues until the advent of adolescence. At this stage the children form their own play-groups; spending several hours of the day in their respective age-groups. Now they are free to play in the streets and the open ground outside the village. Maternal attention is now considerably reduced; the elders keep an eye on them, but apart from this they have considerable freedom. As they grow older solicitation of affectionate responses through handling, play and fondling gradually diminishes. Toilet training becomes strict, and the child is expected to have full control over defecation and urination. Cleanliness is insisted upon, and any failure on his part in this respect arouses anger in the elders. The erring child is ridiculed, chastised and punished. Now they must wear clothes and begin to learn to hide their genitals. If the elders find their organs exposed they point to them and ask, 'Arre, what is that? Why are you exhibiting that little thing?' Children often develop a sense of shame at this stage, blush at such remarks, hide their organs and run away from the elders. Discipline becomes more rigorous and physical punishment is more frequent. Rewards for good behaviour include praise, partiality and favoured treatment on the part of the parents, larger share of food and small gifts of money. Punishments, on the other hand, include rebukes and threats, ridicule, threats to report the matter to the father, spanking and occasionally denial of food or playing things or even locking up in a solitary room. Considerable dishonesty is practised by elders in their dealings with children, which is often detected by the latter and angers them all the more.

very close to the human inmates. Rubbish and cow-dung are stored up in front of the houses, while in rainy seasons the whole becomes a stagnant pool of water, rubbish and cow-dung. 511 356

The houses of the Pariahs are filled with an awful smell of skins, bones and putrid flesh. The insufficiency of food that they suffer from tempts them to fill their bellies with toddy and other stimulants that ultimately ruin their health.

The Sudras are perfectly temperate and simple in habits and food. The "twice-born" castes are bound to marry their girls before twelve. The lower castes are not bound to do so. But the Sudras and lower castes actually marry their girls at a very early age, both to satisfy the anxiety of elders and for fear they may not have the money afterwards. I know a case in which a girl two months old was married to a boy of two years, the boy dying a year later of cholera. They maintain strict widowhood like the Brahmans. There is no purdah. 582

The villagers bathe and wash clothes and also wash their cattle in the same tank as that used for drinking. 515

Education.—There is one school; its accommodation and equipment being a rented house, an atlas, a globe, text books, some pictures of common objects, civics primers, dumb-bells, a black board, a desk, benches for boys to sit upon. 871

Elementary education is given up to the fourth standard, in the vernacular, in history, arithmetic, geography, civics, etc. This education is most impractical and incomplete and ill-suited to the villagers, who do not proceed to college classes. It does not enable them to read good books in Telugu or to learn even the elementary principles of sanitation. They are never made to feel that they are citizens of a world, or an empire, or a province, outside the narrow bounds of their village.

Attendance—

	Boys.	Girls.
1913	19	4
1914	9	3
1915	45	12
1916	54	8
1917	48	6

About 30 per cent of the adults can read the vernacular; two persons can read and talk English. There is a noted musician in the village but no other pandit. Not less than 25 or 30 per cent of those who have passed through the school have lost their capacity to write or cipher after leaving. One boy has proceeded to the Mechanical Engineering course in the Victoria Technical Institute, Bombay; another to the Arts course in the Madras University. [191]

There are 90 to 100 books, of which 70 are owned by Brahmans, made up of novels, dramas, puranas, the Mahabharata and stories. Among the Sudras, a development of literary taste, though in a very small degree, is perceptible. There are many devotional songs and lives of Telugu saints, while stories of the epics rendered into songs and recited by "Bhagavathars" are very frequent. The latest innovation is the introduction of dramas. Novels are still a rarity, as well as histories. No newspaper comes to the village. 538

The village has no temple except that of the village goddess. Her festival is celebrated with much slaughter of cattle and goats given by their owners wherever there is an outbreak of cholera or small-pox; or, failing these, once in four or five years. The cost is 796